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regem et comitem." To the same institution may possibly be traced the reference in the Consultum de Monticulis Walliæ, a document which is commonly ascribed to the age of Ethelred, but which Schmid inclines to refer to that of Athelstan or even earlier: "XII lahmen, i. e. legis homines debent rectum discernere Walis et Englis, VI Walisei et VI Anglici; et perdant omne quod suum est si injuste judicent, vel se adlegient quod rectius nescierunt." There may not be sufficient evidence to prove the adoption into the English constitution of the Frankish Schöffen system, but there is certainly enough to make it desirable that the point should be more thoroughly investigated, and its constitutional interest explained.

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13. — *Etruscan Researches*. By ISAAC TAYLOR. 8vo. pp. xii, 388. London: Macmillan & Co. 1874.

MR. TAYLOR does not overstate, in his first chapter, or "Prologue," the interest of the Etruscan problem. There is hardly another ethnological and linguistic question left which so presses for an answer. That there should have been a people of whose works and institutions, and language even, we know so much, a neighbor and rival during several centuries of that Latin-speaking race from which we derive our civilization, and itself a not unimportant contributor to that civilization, and that we should not know where to place it in the system of human races and languages, — this is a constant trial and mortification to the votaries of ethnology. It is a problem akin with that of the Basques, though not without important differences also. We are more readily content to accept the Basques as a relic of a South-western European population, dispossessed and almost crowded out of existence by the tribes of our own kindred when they spread themselves to cover European soil. But the Etruscans are a community dropped down, as it were, in a spot surrounded on all sides by peoples whom we know, and showing no signs of being older and more original than these; and there are traditions of their having come in from afar: how can it be impossible to connect them with some recognized division of the human race outside of Italy?

A question like this, of course, has not gone without finding many would-be answers. There are plenty of people in the world who can settle any matter, however difficult, of which the conditions are sufficiently indefinite and obscure. Mr. Taylor reports briefly some of the attempts made in this direction, and the results reached. There is hardly an existing or extinct race of men with whom the Etruscans

have not been identified, to the entire satisfaction of the identifier and of a small knot of friends and admirers, but to the incredulity or ridicule of the general community of scholars. We do not recognize, among the names mentioned by our author, any which we are accustomed to regard as possessing authority.

Such names, however, are attached to one, and the latest, of these attempts, to which Mr. Taylor makes no allusion. It has been understood for two or three years back that Corssen, a German scholar who is famous among the foremost for his labors upon the history and phonology of the Italian languages, has convinced himself that the Etruscan was a member of the group, akin with Latin and Oscan and Umbrian, and is writing a work to demonstrate the relationship. Professor Ascoli, of Milan, the greatest of living Italian scholars, and a leading authority in the modern science of comparative philology, declares, in his admirable *Corsi di Glottologia*, his undoubting belief in the same doctrine. A colleague of his, Professor E. Lattes, has published a series of essays, in the Transactions of the Royal Institute of Lombardy, intended to prove it; and the well-known scholar and critic, Schweizer-Sidler, of Zurich, expresses in Kuhn's *Zeitschrift* (xxi. 278) his entire acceptance of the proof. Here is a body of authorities such as was never before arrayed in favor of any opinion upon the derivation and connections of the Etruscan language; and we have every *a priori* reason for supposing that the problem long found insoluble has at last yielded to the superior and better-wielded forces of modern linguistic science. We are not called upon to accept the solution on authority alone, until the proofs and arguments have been made fully accessible and have passed the critical revision of a larger number of scholars; we are even justified in looking with some incredulity upon a result which, if really attainable, ought, it should seem, to have been reached long ago; but we are at least required to hold our opinions in suspense, till we shall see what is to be said for the new view, and to scrutinize meanwhile very sharply any other that is brought before us on inferior authority.

It is, therefore, an unfavorable time for a work to appear from the hand of a man who has not made for himself any name in ethnology or philology, and who claims to have settled the question another way. Mr. Taylor thinks that he proves the Etruscans related, beyond a peradventure, to the great Central Asiatic, or Ural-Altaic, or Scythian, or Turanian family, of which the Hungarians, Finns, and Turks are the other principal European representatives. In examining his theory, our inquiry must first be turned toward the signs of philological method which his argument exhibits: does he show that he is

capable of comprehending and approaching a philological question in the only mode which will now be accepted as capable of leading to valuable results? And the answer will be decidedly in the negative. He recurs, rather, to the old superficial and hap-hazard way of etymologizing which was in vogue before the era of modern philology began, only varnishing it over with a thin coat of apparent science. He takes the immense and heterogeneous mass of the so-called "Turanian" dialects, languages which have not yet been proved by thoroughly satisfactory evidence to belong together as a family; he turns in among them the Egyptian, Caucasian, and Yenisean tongues, which no sound philologist has dared to rank as "Turanian" at all; and among them all he has no difficulty in picking out words and forms in abundance with which to compare his Etruscan material. That is simply the whole gist of the volume. There is no need to examine and criticise in detail the comparisons made and the conclusions drawn by such a method. Those who have given themselves the trouble to do so have found what was to be expected. An eminent English scholar, W. Wright, has pointed out scores of cases in which Mr. Taylor has taken Arabic and Persian words for Turkish, and compared and identified accordingly. It were useless to blame the author for this; it is nothing more than the natural result of his way of working; the rest is not really any better, though it may not so easily be proved bad. Let a man go off etymologizing among languages which he confessedly knows nothing of, and this is the sort of harvest which he must look to reap. For example, Mr. Taylor takes *mach*, one of the six words or fragments of words found on the sides of a pair of dice, and constituting the cardinal point of his demonstration: he first assumes it to be an unabbreviated numeral, then to signify "one," then to have meant originally "finger"; and finally he hunts it through the whole Altaic vocabulary of words for "finger," finding and rejoicing over such equivalents as Hungarian *ej*, Turkish *bir*, and Samoyed *om*. The whole process is a marvel of unsound and uncritical etymologizing. It is in vain that he would defend it by pointing out the apparent discordances between confessedly related words in our own family of languages. There is all the difference in the world between following out the slightest hints of correspondence in languages whose relationship is already demonstrated and whose laws of correspondence are worked out, and trying to demonstrate relationship by them. The summing up of the argument in the last chapter is just as characteristic. The Etruscan, we are told, must of course be either Indo-European or Semitic or Turanian,—there being, we suppose, no other families of speech in the world, and no possibility

that Etruscan should be, like Basque, an isolated remnant of a lost family. But it is neither Indo-European nor Semitic, — those languages, unfortunately, are too well known to be juggled with after Mr. Taylor's fashion. Hence, it is necessarily "Turanian"; and it only remains to determine which of the branches of that great family it cousins with most nearly: the decision is, suitably enough, in favor of the least-known group and the one most uniformly considered unrelated with the rest, — namely, the Yenisean! But more than that the exquisite delicacy of the process enables us to determine: it is only the ruling class that have wandered from the heart of Siberia, to gain and exercise dominion over a populace of Finnish origin!

Mr. Taylor supports his conclusion from linguistic evidence with plenty of correspondences in myth and religion and manners; but they are far too shadowy and indefinite to be of any value by themselves. The science which founds ethnological deductions on such material has to make great advances before it can claim to establish anything satisfactorily. A valuable treasure may perhaps lie hidden here; but it is inaccessible hitherto, — and will always remain so to hands as hasty and heedless as those of this author.

As a handy volume of information respecting the Etruscans, as containing record and ingenious discussion of some of the inscriptional material of their language, and as calling anew general attention to the subject, Mr. Taylor's work will not be without value; but it will make no permanent impression on the opinion of scholars respecting the questions which it raises and discusses.

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14. — *Famous Trials.* By JOHN T. MORSE, JR. Boston: Little, Brown, & Co. 1874.

"JE ne vois que la condamnation à mort qui distingue un homme; c'est la seule chose qui ne s'achète pas." The reason given by Stendhal's heroine for her preference is peculiar to that charming, though cynical, young lady; but her interest in criminals is common to all. A more simple expression of it, in real life, is found in Marjorie Fleming's Diary. "The history of all the malcontents as ever was hanged is amusing," was the result of her studies, at the age of seven. At all times, to persons of every nation, age, sex, and condition, whatever their varieties of education and taste, the story of a criminal trial has been fascinating above all things; and he who tells that story faithfully will never want an audience. From Orestes to Orton, from Æschylus to Mr. Morse, the heroes and the